

DISCUSSION OF COMMONLY USED METHODS IN KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT IN UNIVERSITY-LEVEL EDUCATION

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Abstract

Whether in the classroom or in the lecture hall, the job of a university professor has many responsibilities. One major aspect of being a professor is evaluating whether or not their material is clear, concise, and correct. These evaluations can range from simple assessment tests to hands-on experiments in a controlled environment, depending on the field of study. This paper will discuss some of the most common methods of knowledge assessment used at university-level.

Keywords: Assessment Method.

1. Known methods used in knowledge assessment for university-level students

- Diagnostic method: this is the simplest method that can be used to test a student's knowledge. Using a few questions, lecturers can "diagnose" a student's understanding of the subject, knowledge, skill level, and their attitude towards a specific context; from there, the educator could formulate a lesson plan. A specific portion could be emphasized as needed, as well as increasing or reducing the amount of time spend to teach it based on the student's level of understanding discovered through the diagnostic method. This method is used throughout the whole session, especially during the introduction of new subjects or contents. The diagnostic helps with finding the knowledge gap to fill in as the lesson goes on; applying this method won't affect the student's grades or performance, as well as not posing any risks.
- Progress evaluation method: this method is applied daily, or weekly during each section of the subject, with the main purpose to see how well the student understands; if their thought process and research path are aligned with how the lesson is intended to be understood; seeing if the student is making any progress in their study, or if they're facing any obstacle, from there helping the student improve their overall performance. This method of evaluation is easy to apply and can be used repeatedly in a short period of time, and the results of the evaluations may or may not contribute to a student's grade, it is up for the lecturer to decide. When applying this method by asking short form questions during lectures, or during presentations or debate by students, bonus grades will be a great form of motivation for students to improve their performance.
- Overall evaluation method commonly has two ways to implement:
 - + After a specific lesson milestone, educators can set up a test to summarize and challenge the student's knowledge and understanding of the course up to the current point. The grades of these tests reflect the student's ability and it will be recorded for the course.

- + The second way to implement this is conducting final exams (known colloquially as finals). After a course is finished, students will attend finals to test their acquired knowledge of said course, as well as their abilities and attitude towards the course. Finals are the most commonly used method not only by individual educator, or just by the department; but conducted by the whole university. The results are then recorded in the student's academic transcript.

Table 1: Knowledge assessment methods for university-level students

Methods	Usage frequency and scale
Diagnostic	Often
Progress evaluation	Applies regularly during debate/presentation/quizzes in class
Overall evaluation	Through tests/finals
Informal test	Through essay, presentation, case study
Grade-based evaluation	Final exams and topical debate
Criteria-based evaluation	Applied to all fields of study

Source: Collected by the author

- + Informal test: this method is used in different occasions decided by the lecturer during classes. This can be applied by giving out short questions for students to answer, or offering case studies for the student to work out a solution. The students could answer by writing an essay or making a presentation; the grades they gain can be officially recorded for their progress.
- + Grade-based evaluation: evaluations based on grades can measure a student's progress when comparing to the standard lesson plan within a specified time period. Within a lecturing course, this method is not often used. Instead, if an educator wants to use this method of evaluation, it should be used on an entire department and following within the course year. This is to figure out if the student understands the situation given by the case study/exam and figuring out a proficient solution to a problem; this, in turn, helps the educator improve their own classes and teaching methods, which benefits both the students and the educators.

Oftentimes, the informal test is considered grade-based evaluation due to how both of these methods produce grades viable for an academic transcript, measuring a student's knowledge, skill level and their attitude towards the course; as well as enabling educators to set up a lecturing outline. Grade-based evaluation is conducted on a set schedule, while informal test is a temporary solution, conducted randomly without a schedule.

- + Grade-based evaluation is a set of exams conducted in a large scale, usually only applied to district-wise, city-wise or country-wise scale.
- + Criteria-based evaluation evaluates the students' records based on criteria set up by the university. This method can be applied very easily for the lecturers, but it is a challenge for the department to set up the baseline for evaluation.

For the evaluation process to produce high-value results, educators should apply multiple methods simultaneously. Evaluations will show the student's progress and bringing out their potential; at the same time, a boost in motivation for lecturers to improve their performance and teaching quality.

2. Survey results about knowledge assessment methods for university-level students in Trade Union University

The author had conducted a small-scale survey on the university's student with the purpose to find out the method of knowledge assessment used on said students during class. The survey is conducted by randomly choosing a number of students present in class and verbally inform them about the questions, then the students would answer on the spot. The questions will explain thoroughly about each method, usage frequency, the scale of the method and the situation a specific method would be used. In total, the survey collected 203 answers, and after the data is compiled and processed using Microsoft Excel, the results are as shown:

- With diagnostic method, meaning the lecturer will ask the student a specific question relating in a not-yet lectured section of the course to see the student's understanding of the new lecture, or new context; if this method should be used regularly towards students.

Table 2: Survey results for diagnostic method

Level	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Students	0	0	16	29	158
Percentage	0	0	7,88	14,29	77,83

Source: Author's survey results, 2/2025

The results shown in Table 2 indicates that over 90% of students agree and strongly agree to the usage of this method in class. This method also encourages students to do their own research of the course, especially questions that leads to the next topic of the lecture; it helps the students to work with their own logic to learn about the upcoming lecture, as well as how each lesson is linked together.

- Progress evaluation method, meaning the lecturer asks questions, or gives out a case study, to estimate the knowledge a student possesses at the current moment, of the current progress of an entire course. This method should be used regularly, at the same time, lecturers can grade their students and record the results. This will motivate the students to be more invested in their study, and as a result, increasing the frequency of interactions between the lecturer and their students during class.

Table 3: Survey results for progress evaluation method

Level	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Students	1	1	18	26	157
Percentage	0,49	0,49	8,87	12,81	77,34

Source: Author's survey results, 2/2025

The results have shown that nearly 90% of students agree and strongly agree to this method being used regularly. Because the questions and exercises being handed out during the class are most often times related to the subject, and it encourages students to work towards a solution to the problem; this is a good way of pushing the student to brain storming and showing their hidden potential. The positive input and feedback, along with bonus grades for their progress is why most student strongly agrees to this method.

- Overall evaluation method is known by conducting tests after reaching a certain milestone in the course and a final exam at the end of the course. Currently, the number of tests within a course before the final exam is determined by how many credits the course is worth. A course worth three credits will have two mid-term tests while a course worth two credits would only have one mid-term test. This test is a form of summation of knowledge for students, though the students have voiced their concern that this form of tests wouldn't truthfully reflects their learning progress. So, to address this concern, educators should use multiple assessing methods simultaneously.

Table 4: Survey results for overall evaluation method

Level	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Students	0	5	24	39	135
Percentage	0	2,5	11,8	19,2	66,5

Source: Author's survey results, 2/2025

From Table 4, we can see that a large number of students agree (66.5%). Most of the courses handled by a lecturer uses this method as their main means of evaluation; not only in Trade Union University, but in other universities, this method is also widely applied. When compares to diagnostic method and progress evaluation method, the results show a clear difference in student's opinion towards this method of assessment.

- For informal tests, where lecturer gives out essay, presentation, case study as assignments, chosen randomly for different context in each individual classes and lectures. The lecturer could help the students by guiding them to a topic related to the course, afterwards, it is the student's duty to do research, analyzing data and submitting a complete assignment; it is then graded by the lecturer through many means, by the quality of the essay, the performance of the presentation, or how well the student handled the situation in a case study. This assessment method takes much more efforts for both the students and the lectures, but in turn, the students will have a greater knowledge gain compares to other methods, have higher proficiency in data compilation, writing, debate, presentation, and teamwork, etc.

Table 5: Survey results for informal test method

Level	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Students	6	8	55	58	76
Percentage	3,0	3,9	27,1	28,6	37,4

Source: Author's survey results, 2/2025

The results show a clear fluctuation in student's opinion about this method, showing students' hesitation in having to conduct research for an essay or a presentation. Albeit at the same time, many students still want to do the work (agree and strongly agree rate are over 65%) for a chance to gain new knowledge and acquiring new skills in their educational pursue.

- For other assessment method such as grade-based evaluation (applies to end-of-course examination or topical debate) and criteria-based evaluation (Applied to all fields of study), there are no student input due to these methods not being used in Trade Union University.

In Conclusion: for effective knowledge assessment, lecturers should apply multiple methods simultaneously during class. Each class and lecture should be catered to individually to figure out the best approach to motivate students in their study. This is the main factor that boost the quality of a class, when the lecturer knows how to motivate students to actively participate in class, interacting with both the material and the educator; in turn, the lecturer would also be motivated to improve their own material and educational standards for students of Trade Union University.

Reference

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